

My name is Ryan H. Cease. I am a Veterans Service Representative, at the Philadelphia VA Regional Office. I have worked with Kristen Ruell for almost 3 years to reveal Systemic Failures and Mismanagement at the Philadelphia VA Regional Office. I would like to add to the record my concerns of the current outcome after the release of the OIG Report Review of Alleged Data Manipulation and Mismanagement at the VA Regional Office Philadelphia, Pennsylvania dated April 15, 2015.

As a result of the investigation the guidance under Fast Letter 13-10 was terminated effective June 27, 2014. Older dates of claims can still be hidden in the VBA systems using the End Product (EP) EP 930 for Service Connected Compensation and EP 937 for Non-Service Connected Pension or Death Compensation and DIC Claims with an earlier effective date.

Since I've been transferred to the VSC Appeals Team in November 2014. I do agree with OIG's findings That they did not substantiate the allegation that VARO staff processed less complicated appealed claims by "cherry picking" easy cases out of docket order. However due to the pressure of achieving production points to justify an employee's workload. Cherry picking is common in the VSC and PMC main floors for regular cases.

Since I've been transferred to the VSC Appeals Team in November 2014, I have firsthand experience on how the workload is managed regarding the Notice of Disagreements. Based on my experience working with the VSC Appeal Team the Notice of Disagreement delay is ongoing. Currently the major issue with the delay are the centralized mail scan delay, VARO Intake Processing Center backlog, and under staffed Appeals Team.

As of last week I conducted a follow up with the anonymous employee regarding the 31,410 pending inquiries. I was informed to date no action have been taken on the pending inquiries via IRIS. Both Kristen and I was informed about this issue by an anonymous employee. Due to the hostility of PMC management towards recognized whistleblowers, the employee did not want to be identified for the possibility of retaliation.

Duplicate records have increased nationwide because the VA Form 21-526EZ, ebenefits, and the new VA Form 21-0966 Intent to File form does not require the Veteran to provide his or her service number. A lot of Veterans with service numbers have claim numbers in the VBA system already. This will create more double payments and headaches to all of the VAROs.

Did VARO staff mishandle military file mail VBMS has an unassigned document location, so instead of physical documents being lost now electronic documents are being lost too. The unassigned document list in VBMS is hardly reviewed and it's equivalent to military file mail. This is nationwide not just at our VARO.

Well we made it this far, I really do hope our efforts will bring some changes not only for our VARO but the whole nation.